

Appendix A. Considered But Eliminated Alternatives

This section describes actions and alternatives that the South Atlantic Council considered in developing this document, but decided not to pursue in Coral Amendment 8. The description of each alternative is followed by a summary statement of why it was eliminated from more detailed summary in Coral Amendment 8.

Action 1:

Sub-Alternative 2a. Modify the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC: from the current northern boundary of the Oculina HAPC (28° 30'N) to 29° 43.5'W. The west and east boundaries would follow the 60 meter and 100 meter depth contour lines, respectively, as represented in the simplified polygon (**Figure 1**). Sub-Alternative 2a = 430 square miles

Sub-Alternative 2b. Modify the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC: from the current northern boundary of the Oculina HAPC (28° 30'N) to 29° 43.5'W. The west and east boundaries would follow the 70 meter and 90 meter depth contour lines, respectively, as represented in the simplified polygon (**Figure 2**). Sub-alternative 2b = 228 square miles

Sub-Alternative 2c. Modify the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC: from the current northern boundary of the Oculina HAPC (28° 30'N) to 29° 43.5'W. The west and east boundaries would follow the 70 meter and 100 meter depth contour lines, respectively, as represented in the simplified polygon (**Figure 3**). Sub-alternative 2c = 278 square miles

Sub-Alternative 2d. Modify the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC: from the current northern boundary of the Oculina HAPC (28° 30'N) to 29° 43.5'W. The west and east boundaries would follow the 60 meter and 90 meter depth contour lines, respectively, as represented in the simplified polygon (**Figure 4**). Sub-alternative 2d = 380 square miles

Discussion

During the December 2012 meeting, the Council had an opportunity to review the Actions and alternatives in the Coral Amendment 8 Options Paper. Prior to the December meeting, the Council had not thoroughly discussed the specific alternatives and had only discussed the recommendations from the Coral, Habitat and Deepwater Shrimp APs regarding modifications to Coral HAPCs. After review of Action 1, the Council discussed that the APs have based recommendations around alternatives that modify a northern expansion of Oculina Bank along the 100 meter eastern contour. The other alternatives have not been discussed in detail by the APs because of occurrence of hardbottom habitat in depths between 90 and 100 meters. Therefore, the Council removed from consideration the alternatives under Action 1 that do not consider modifications to the northern boundary around the 100 meter eastern boundary.

Further, at the June 2013 Council meeting, Sub-alternative 2a under Action 1 was removed to the considered but rejected appendix. The Council discussed at length the Coral, Habitat and Deepwater Shrimp APs recommendations for preferred alternatives that resulted from discussions during their May 2013 AP meetings. The APs did not recommend the Council consider Sub-alternative 2a under Action 1 as a preferred alternative because other Sub-alternatives were more favorable for protection of habitat while conserving important rock shrimp fishing grounds. As a result of the APs discussion, the Council removed the alternative from further consideration in Coral Amendment 8.

Action 3:

Alternative 2. Expand Stetson-Miami Terrace Coral HAPC in the area west of the existing boundary approximately by the 200 meter depth contour between latitude 30°45.0' to the north and latitude 29°52.0' to the south (**Figure 5**).

Discussion

During the December 2012 meeting, the Council had an opportunity to review the Actions and alternatives in the Coral Amendment 8 Options Paper. Prior to the December meeting, the Council had not thoroughly discussed the specific alternatives and had only discussed the recommendations from the Coral, Habitat and Deepwater Shrimp APs regarding modifications to Coral HAPCs. The modification of Stetson-Miami Terrace Coral HAPC as recommended by the Coral AP during their meeting in October 2011 and depicted in **Figure 5** was revised during the May 2012 Coral AP and again during the joint Deepwater Shrimp and Coral AP meeting in October 2012. The recommendation for modification of this area that surfaced during the joint AP meeting was to incorporate areas of newly discovered *Lophelia* habitat west of the existing HAPC while releasing the flatbottom region in the southern southeast portion to the extent possible. As a result of the revised recommendation from the APs, the Council updated Alternative 2 under Action 3 and removed the former language for this alternative to the Considered but Rejected Appendix.

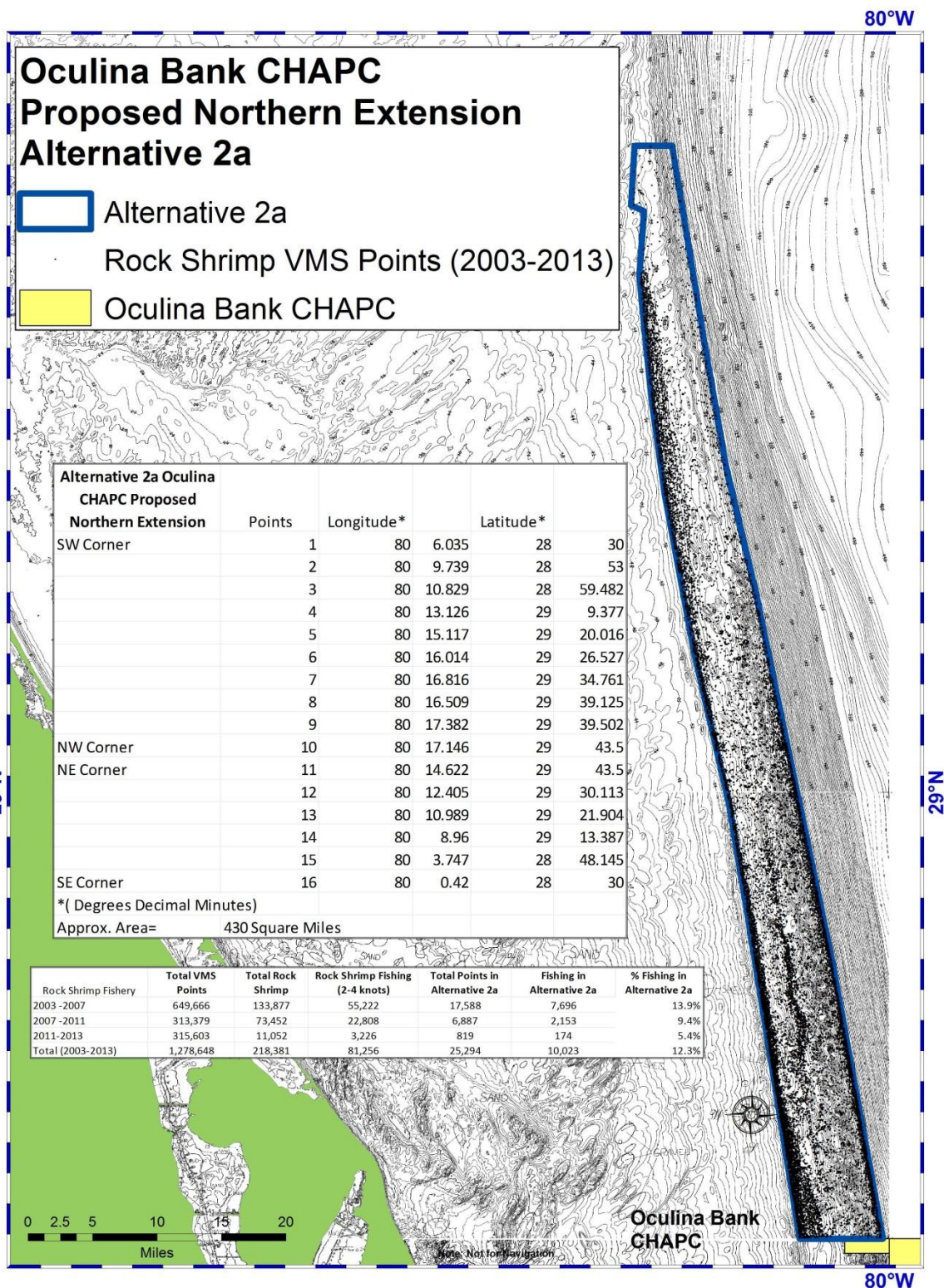


Figure 2. Action 1, Sub-Alternative 2a. Oculina Bank HAPC Proposed Northern Extension and Rock Shrimp VMS (2003-2013).

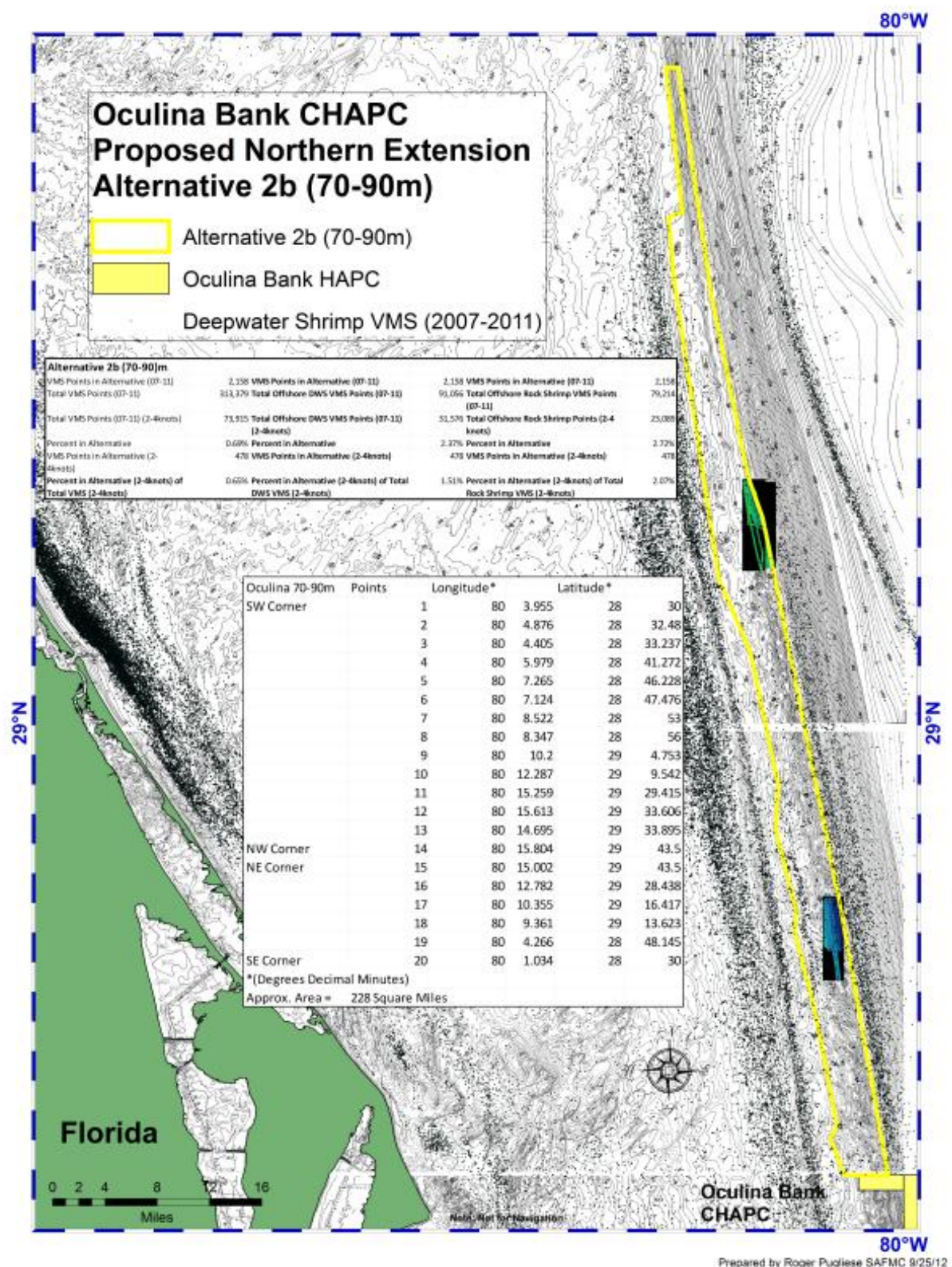


Figure 3. Action 1, Sub-Alternative 2b. Modification to the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC. In this northern zone, the west and east boundaries would follow the 70 meter and 90 meter depth contour lines, as represented in the simplified polygon.

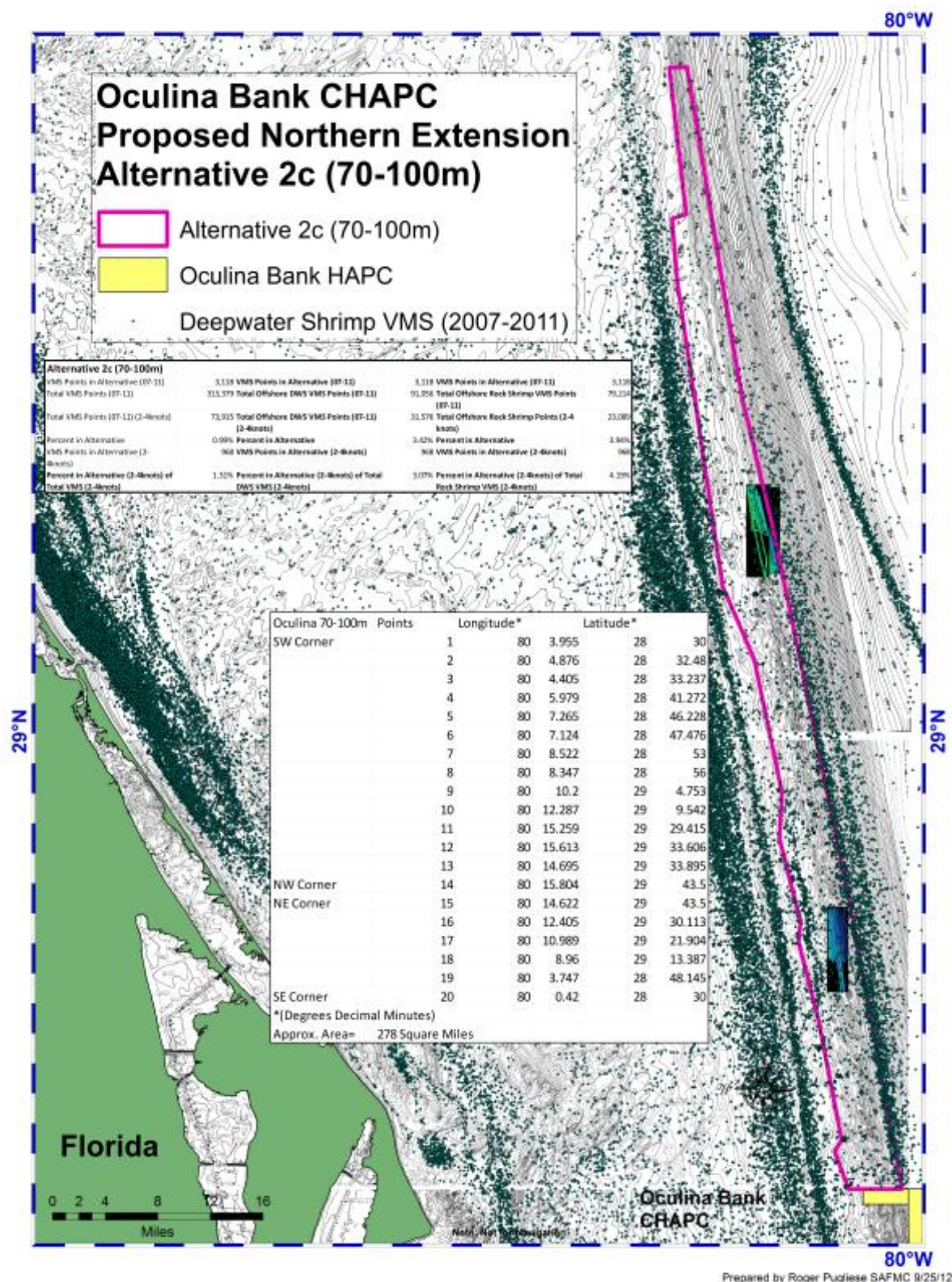


Figure 4. Action 1, Sub-Alternative 2c. Modification to the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC. In this northern zone, the west and east boundaries would follow the 70 meter and 100 meter depth contour lines, as represented in the simplified polygon.

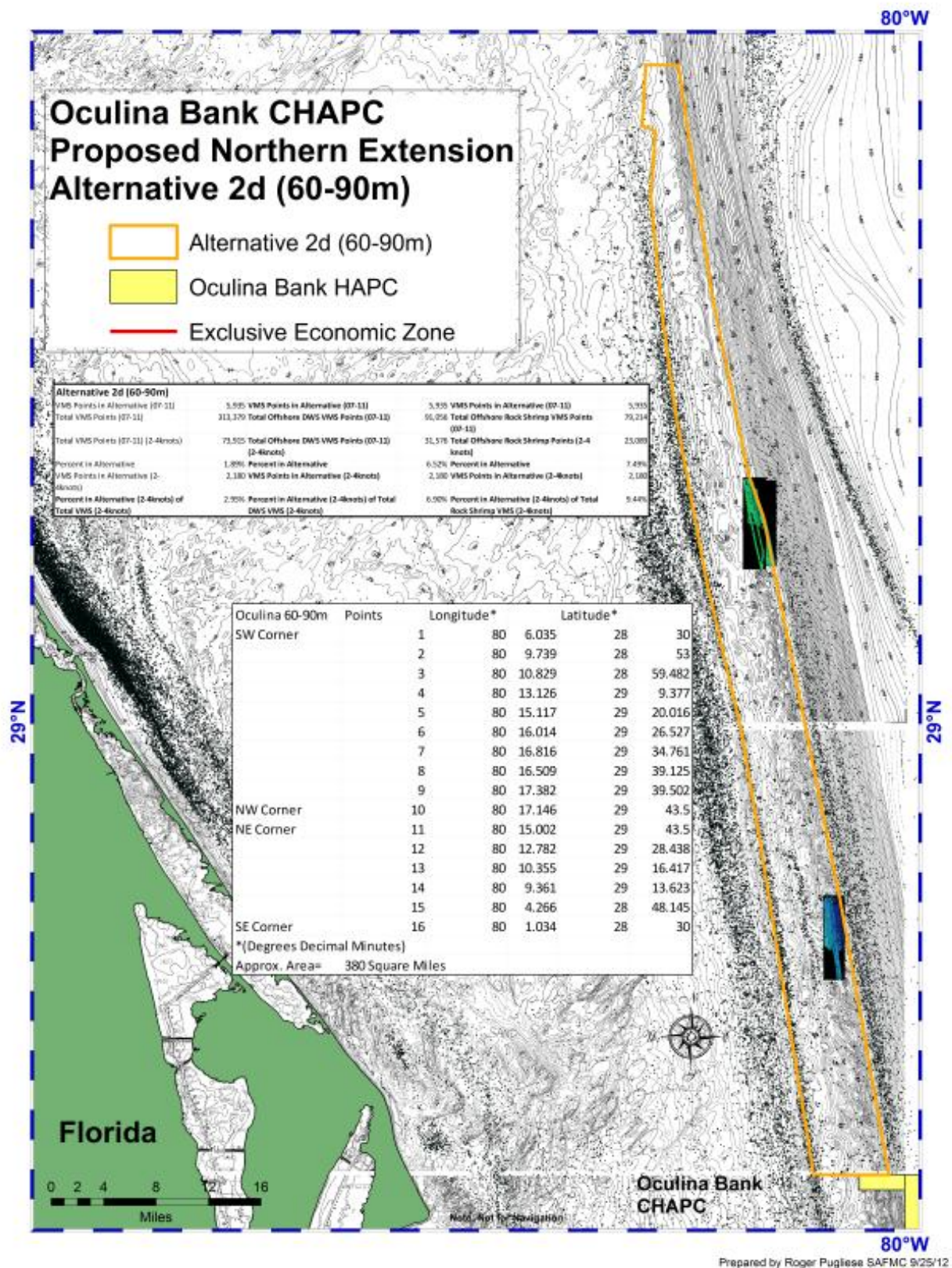


Figure 5. Action 1, Sub-Alternative 2d. Modification to the northern boundary of the Oculina Bank HAPC. In this northern zone, the west and east boundaries would follow the 60 meter and 90 meter depth contour lines, as represented in the simplified polygon.

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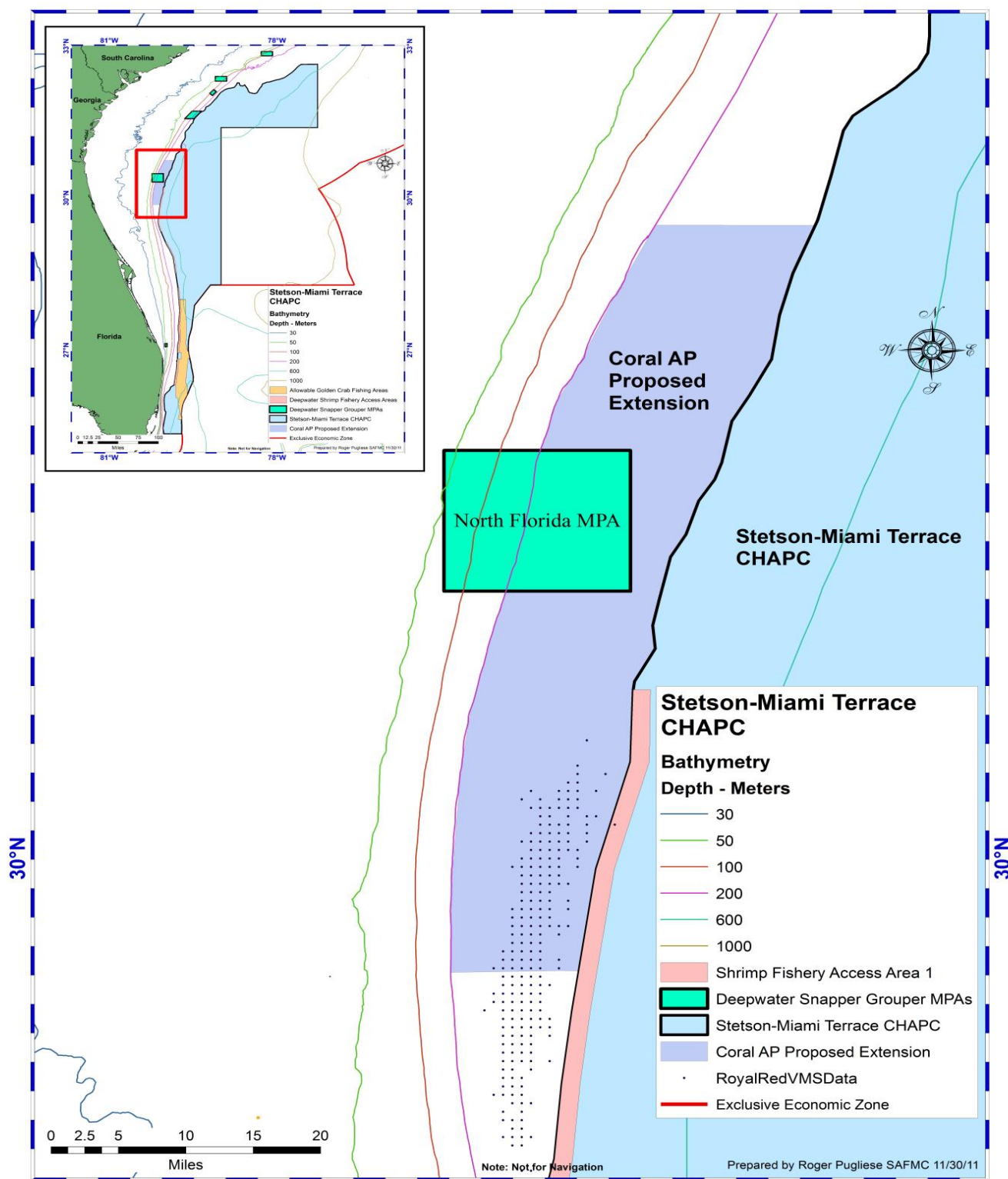


Figure 6. Action 3, Alternative 2, the Coral Advisory Panel’s original proposed expansion of the Stetson-Miami Terrace HAPC western boundary.